

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 LA PAZ 03214 230243Z  
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 CA-01 SCS-06 L-03 H-01 SS-15  
NSC-05 SP-02 /053 W  
-----027389 232327Z /63

R 211955Z APR 78  
FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0457

C O N F I D E N T I A L LA PAZ 3214

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: CASC, BL  
SUBJECT: AMERICAN PRISONERS

REF: STATE 94842

1. FOLLOWING HIS RETURN FROM THE UNITED STATES, FATHER  
BOETELER MET WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND OTHER EMBASSY OFFICIALS TO  
DISCUSS THE PROPOSAL DESCRIBED IN PARA 1 OF REFTEL.

2. THE EMBASSX, WHILE ACCEPTING THAT BOETELER'S IDEA HAS  
MERIT, DOES NOT BELIEVE THE TIME I S PROPITIOUS FOR PRESENTING  
TO PRESIDENT BANZER SUCH A REQUEST--WHICH WOULD BE REBUFFED.  
THERE ARE A NUMBER OF FACTORS NOW AT PLAY, ANY ONE OF  
WHICH NCULD BE ADEQUATE TO CONVINCEN BANZER HE SHOULD REJECT  
A US APPEAL TO RELEASE SOME PRISONERS ON HEALTH OR  
COMPASSIONATE GROUNDS.

--HE HAS TURNED US DOWN BEFORE ON SIMILAR REQUESTS.

--IN A CHARGED PRE-ELETORAL ATMOSPHERE RELASING SOME  
NARCOTICS PRISONERS IS ONE OF THE MOST UNPOPULAR ACTION HE  
COULD TAKE; A POLITICALLY WEAKENED BANZER IS SIMPLY NOT GOING  
TO VOLUNTEER FOR SUCH A BEATING IN HIS LAST DAYS IN  
OFFICE.

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PAGE 02 LA PAZ 03214 230243Z

--SINCE BANZER VIEWS THE CURRENT US STANCE IN BOLIVIA AS  
ONE OF HELPING TO FRUSTRATE HIS (WELL-CONCEALED) INTENT  
TO POSTPONE JULY ELETIONS, HE IS IN NO MMOD TO DO US FAVORS.

3. IN MORE GENERAL TERMS, THE PROBLEMS DESCRIBED ABOUT WERE  
AIRED DURING THE CONVERSATION WITH BOETELER. THE AMBASNPNGR  
SUGGESTED AS AN ALTERNATIVE THAT THE GOB BE APPROACHED WITH

A SIMILAR PROPOSAL FOLLOWING THE JULY ELECTIONS. ONE OF TWO POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND. FIRST, AN INTERIM GOVERNMENT (BETWEEN JULY ELECTIONS AND AUGUST INAUGURATION, WITH OR WITHOUT BNZER A THE HELM) MAY BE MORE WILLING TO HELP AS IT WILL HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE. SECOND, AND MORE LIKELY, A FEW WEEKS LATER THE NEWLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT MAY BE IN A MOOD TO HELP US ON THIS BY EXPLORING A FORMULA THAT WOULD ENTAIL COMPASSIONATE RELEASE OF A GROUP OF PRISONERS (NOT JUST AMERICANS AND NOT JUST NARCOTICS PRISONERS). BOETELER INFORMED ONE OF THE CONSOFFS, FOLLOWING THE CONVERSATION, THAT HE AGREED WITH THE EMBASSY'S REASONING AND HOPED THE DEPARTMENT WOULD SUPPORT AN APPROACH TO THE GOB LATER IN THE YEAR IF THE AMBASSADOR THOUGHT IT USEFUL.

BOEKER

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## Message Attributes

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**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** n/a  
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**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
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**Errors:** N/A  
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**Review Markings:**  
Sheryl P. Walter  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
20 Mar 2014  
**Markings:** Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014